

Figure 1

TORRANCE**5 arrested in credit fraud ring**

The Secret Service arrested five people — including a Torrance man — in connection with a credit card duplication scheme, authorities said.

The man was arrested about noon Friday at a Torrance house in the 2800 block of Knode Street. He was led away in handcuffs, according to a witness.

The arrests throughout the Los Angeles area were part of an ongoing investigation into restaurant workers who duplicate credit cards used by customers, said assistant special agent Elmer Kanutson.

The Secret Service made the arrest because the agency is in charge of protecting the nation's financial institutions, Kanutson said.

The agency did not want to identify the suspect because the investigation was continuing.

"It's an ongoing case and we'd like to say as little as possible," Kanutson said.

Figure 2



Figure 3

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of a central system 10, according to one embodiment of the present invention. The central system 10 includes a central system processor 430, a central system storage devices 426, a central system operating system 402, a central system program 404, a customer database 438, a merchant database 440, a transaction database 442, and a security function 406. The central system processor 430 is connected to the central system storage devices 426. The central system storage devices 426 include the customer database 438, the merchant database 440, and the transaction database 442. The central system operating system 402 is connected to the central system program 404. The central system program 404 includes the security function 406, a payment processing function 408, a customer interface function 410, a merchant interface function 412, and an interface function 414.

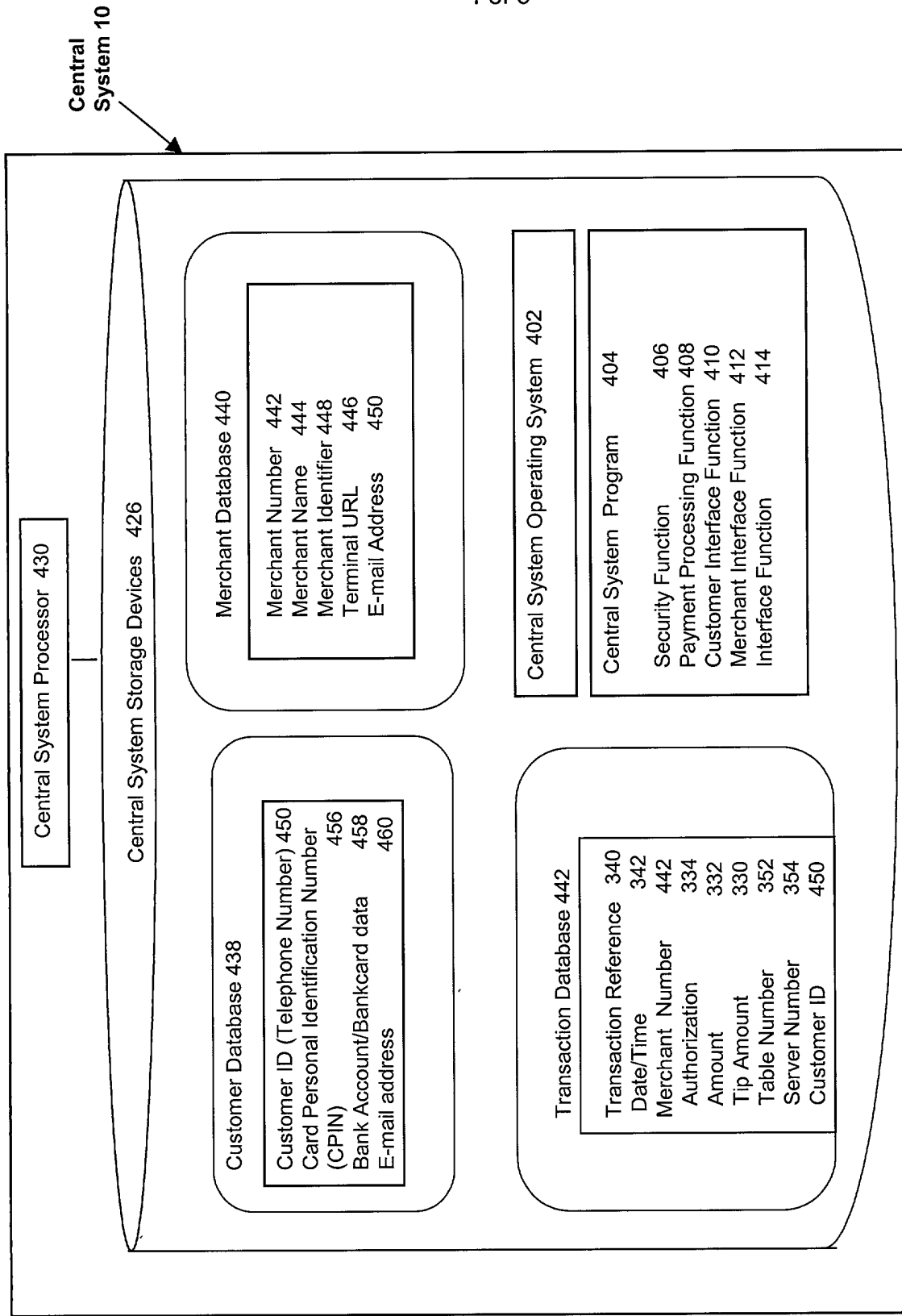


Figure 4

